United Nations

Daily Highlights

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ United Nations inspection team removed from the vicinity of Iraqi Ministry of Agriculture following new incident today; Chairman of the Special Commission to consider various means to monitor building; United States Permanent Representative warns of "serious consequences".

+ In a report, Secretary-General tells Security Council that conditions do not exist for United Nations to supervise heavy weapons of parties to conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

+ Secretary-General expresses regret at murder of staff member of International Civil Aviation Organization in Niarobi, Avi Rappaport.

+ Panel of Technical Experts on Register of Conventional Arms concludes debate on Register of data on destabilizing offensive weapons and international arms transfers.

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The inspection team of the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) on Iraqi Disarmament monitoring the Ministry of Agriculture in Baghdad was removed early today from the vicinity of the building. Removal was predicated upon the Chief Inspector's view of the threat of violence against the team and the totally inadequate Iraqi Government security protection. The Chief Inspector informed the Executive Chairman of the Special Commission of his decision.

A press release issued at Headquarters today also reported the latest incident in Baghdad, where an unknown assailant tried to stab an UNSCOM inspector early this morning. The assailant was subsequently apprehended and released by the Iraqi security forces. According to the communiqué, the incident had led to the conclusion that the Iraqi side "had no intention of preventing incidents of physical violence against the inspectors outside the building".

The text also pointed out the failure of the Government of Iraq to ensure the safety and security of UNSCOM inspectors. This amounted to a violation by

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Iraq of Security Council resolution 687 - the so-called ceasefire resolution adopted after the Persian Gulf last year.

At a press conference at Headquarters today, Rolf Ekeus, Chairman of the Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament, told correspondents that despite the attacks perpetrated against the United Nations inspectors and their subsequent removal for security reasons, the Special Commission had not given up its efforts and would continue to consider various means to monitor the building under the current conditions imposed by Iraq. Mr. Ekeus also reported that he had informed the President of the Security Council of the new developments.

Reacting to the incident, Ambassador Edward Perkins of the United States, expressed tonight in a press release his outrage "by the Iraqi behaviour". "The Security Council has made clear that Iraq's continued refusal to allow access is a material and unacceptable breach of the ceasefire resolution", he said, before concluding that Iraq's failure to comply with United Nations resolutions "will result in serious consequences".

The inspectors of the Special Commission on Iraqi Disarmament had been monitoring the building of the Ministry of Agriculture in Baghdad since 5 July, following the refusal by the Iraqi's authorities to allow them to visit the premises. The members of the Commission contend that documents relating to Iraq's prohibited military programme were stored on the premises, while the Iraqi side claim that such a search would violate their country's sovereignty.

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"After carefully considering the London Agreement and the circumstances in which it was concluded...I have come to the conclusion that the conditions do not exist for me to recommend that the Security Council accept the request of the three parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina that the United Nations supervise the heavy weapons that the parties have agreed to place under international supervision," Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has told the Security Council, in a report dated 21 July on the situation in that Republic.

"In the first place," the Secretary-General writes, "the request contained in the London Agreement raises the question of the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security." Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter, he points out, underlines the primary responsibility of the Security Council in such matters providing, for instance, that in certain circumstances it can "utilize" regional organizations or agencies. There is no provision for the reverse to occur, he says. "In other instances when the United Nations and a regional organization have both been involved in an international peace and security situation, care has been taken to ensure that the primacy of the world Organization has not been compromised", added the Secretary-General.

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"Secondly, the United Nations did not participate in the negotiation of the London Agreement," Mr. Boutros-Ghali writes, and it is "most unusual for the United Nations to be asked to help implement a politico-military agreement in whose negotiation it has played no part".

His concern is heightened, he says, by the lack of clarity on the respective roles of the United Nations and the European Community with respect to strengthening the ceasefire in the longer term. He has asked Lord Carrington to provide him with the records of the London negotiations.

Thirdly, continues the Secretary-General, certain conditions - including the consent and cooperation of the parties and a practicable mandate - have to exist before a successful peace-keeping operation can be established. Neither exists in the present case.

Fourthly, the additional function which the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) is asked to assume is "simply beyond the present operational and logistical capacity of the United Nations", he stresses. With UNPROFOR already stretched to breaking-point, with severe shortages of civilian personnel and of almost all categories of equipment, it would take at least three months to deploy what is required to implement the Force Commander's concept for the weapons supervision. For those reasons, Mr. Boutros-Ghali points out earlier, the parties would have to maintain their commitment to the ceasefire without international help for some time.

Finally, he says, there is the question of priorities. "The United Nations is already massively engaged in the former Yugoslavia. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is leading the international effort to deal with the largest humanitarian crisis which has afflicted Europe since the Second World War, with some 2.25 million refugees and displaced persons....On the peace-keeping side, some 13,600 troops are deployed in Croatia, the third largest force ever fielded by the Organization." His concern, says the Secretary-General, "is that if the Security Council continues to concentrate its attention and resources to such an extent on the Yugoslav problem, this will be at the expense of the Organization's ability to help resolve equally cruel and dangereous conflicts elsewhere, for example in Somalia."

In conclusion, the Secretary-General indicates that he will shortly be recommending to the Security Council a further enlargement of UNPROFOR's mandate and strength in the United Nations Protected Areas. "I am not decrying the European Community's achievement in negotiating the London Agreement. Nor am I suggesting any reduction in the existing activities of the United Nations in the former Yugoslavia. Nor, of course, am I questioning the Security Council's right to decide what the response of the United Nations to the London Agreement should be", Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali concludes.

The Secretary-General's report is in response to a request made by the Security Council on 17 July, which had asked him to report to it on the implementation and resource implications of its decision in principal to respond positively to the request that the United Nations make arrangements

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for the supervision by UNPROFOR of all heavy weapons. The request had been made following the agreement reached by the parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina that day in London. The agreement also called for a 14-day ceasefire, during which all parties were to explore measures for strengthening the ceasefire in the longer term and agreed that all refugees would be permitted to return to the places from which they had been expelled.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has expressed his deep regret at the murder of Avi Rappaport, an staff member of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in Niarobi, who was gunned down by unidentified assailants during a robbery attempt on 19 July. He died the following day.

Mr. Rappaport, who was 51, had been working for ICAO since 1990. The Secretary-General conveyed his heartfelt condolences and those of all his colleagues to Mrs. Rappaport and the Government of Israel.

The United Nations has contact the Government of Kenya regarding the incident.

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The Panel of Technical Experts on the Register of Conventional Arms has concluded its deliberations and adopted a consensus report. The Register, as a first step, provides for the reporting of data on seven categories of offensive weapons considered to be most destabilizing for international security. It also provides background information on legislation covering arms transfers between different countries.

The Register, by introducing openness and transparency into the field of arms transfers, is intended to help create an atmosphere conducive to actual measures of disarmament and to serve as an instrument for preventive diplomacy. The Office for Disarmament Affairs is establishing a computerized data base for processing information submitted by Governments for inclusion in the Register.

At a second stage, the Register is to be expanded to include data on military holdings and procurement through national production. That issue will be handled by another group of experts to be convened in 1994.

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